

1. INTRODUCTION

The City is seeking proposals from local non-profit organizations that provide direct technical assistance services to small businesses and microenterprises located in Minneapolis. The total funding available for the Business Technical Assistance Program (B-TAP) in 2013 is \$500,000.00 and we expect to receive multiple proposals. During the contracting process, the selected service providers and the City will agree upon the contract outcomes and deliverables. These will be outcomes-based contracts for up to two years. Recipients will submit quarterly invoices in accordance with the terms of their contracts. Contract payments are based on successful completion of the outcomes in the contract (see Exhibit A for contract Scope of Services template).

2. OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Small Business Technical Assistance Program is to help Minneapolis-based businesses start or expand, and to support job creation in the City.

For the 2013 funding round, B-TAP is seeking to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide financial and technical support to create new business in the City of Minneapolis.
- Support business growth, job creation and real estate acquisition for existing businesses conducting operations in the City of Minneapolis.
- Provide technical assistance tools to retain existing business in the City of Minneapolis.

3. PROGRAM DETAILS

Funding for the Small Business Technical Assistance Program will be separated into three categories. Organizations may apply for one or more categories. Your proposal should clearly indicate which category or categories you are applying for.

a. Category 1 – New Business Development (\$225,000.00 available funding / \$50,000.00 cap)

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation, training and/or networking opportunities to develop new businesses located in the City of Minneapolis. B-TAP will pay up to \$5,000.00 for every new business created in Minneapolis. Additionally, service providers may be eligible to receive bonus dollars if the assisted businesses meet the bonus dollars criteria (see p. 2). Service providers must prove how the provided services made a significant contribution to the development of the new business.

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Business profile report and description of the services provided (exhibit E)
- CDBG Income verification form (exhibit G)

b. Category 2 – Targeted Business Growth (\$175,000.00 available funding / \$50,000.00 cap)

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation, training and/or networking opportunities to businesses that results in new jobs created, physical expansion or substantial sales growth. Service recipients must be located in Minneapolis. The contractor must demonstrate how the provided services made a significant contribution to the business growth. B-TAP will pay \$5,000.00 for each business successfully served. Additionally, service providers may be eligible to receive bonus dollars if the assisted businesses meet the bonus dollars criteria (see p. 2). To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Business profile report and description of the services provided (exhibit E)
- Proof of significant outcome: financial statements, job creation documentation or real estate transaction.

c. Category 3 – General Business Technical Assistance (\$100,000.00 available funding / \$25,000.00 cap)

The selected service provider will provide one-on-one consultation to existing businesses to retain existing jobs and business operations in the City of Minneapolis. B-TAP will pay up to \$50.00 per hour for technical assistance, up to 10 hours per business. Service providers must report how the provided services made a significant contribution for business retention. This category is **not** eligible for bonus dollars.

To be reimbursed, City Staff will request the following documentation:

- Technical Assistance report (exhibit F)
- CDBG Income verification form (exhibit G)

d. Bonus Dollars: Bonus dollars will be available to incentivize strategic growth (\$50,000.000 available funding)

Service providers may be eligible to receive a \$2,500 bonus for each business assisted from the categories 1 and 2. Bonus dollars will operate under the first-come, first-serve basis until available funds are exhausted. To receive bonus dollars, assisted businesses must fulfill one or more of the following characteristics:

i. Located in the Following Geographical Sectors:

- Areas designated as “intervene” by the City’s Great Street program:
<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-113285.pdf>

ii. Or Industry

- Manufacturing
- Technology
- Health
- Green and renewable energy
- Arts and creative economy

iii. Or Jobs Created

- Created at least 5 full time jobs employing residents of Minneapolis

e. Program Details Summary

Objective	Expected Outcome	Dollar per unit	Bonus Max	Bonus amount*
New Business (Category 1)	40 businesses	\$ 5,000.00	10 businesses	\$ 2,500.00
Business Growth (Category 2)	30 businesses	\$ 5,000.00	10 businesses	\$ 2,500.00
Business Retention (Category 3)	2000 Hours	\$ 50.00	N/A	N/A

Note: All the categories are mutually exclusive. For example if a client is claimed under category 1, it cannot be claimed under category 3 in the same funding round.

f. CDBG Requirements: (apply to categories 1 and 3).

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds have been used in Minneapolis since 1981 to support neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services. CDBG funds may be used for financial assistance to business enterprises through grants, loans, loan guarantees, and by providing training, technical assistance, and support services for small businesses. The City of Minneapolis is deploying a portion of these funds to increase the level of technical assistance available to Minneapolis-based businesses that can be specifically categorized as microenterprises. By definition, microenterprises have 5 or fewer employees with at least one being the business owner. Organizations will need to comply with reporting requirements such as income verification.

It is important that applicants understand that CDBG funds must be used only to serve persons qualifying as low- and moderate-income individuals that own or wish to establish a microenterprise. Organizations must be able to collect information on each person receiving assistance, including, but not limited to: data on the individual's family size and income. The assistance provided must support a federally identified national objective. The City will not reimburse any organization that fails to document and support the established criteria.

g. Contract Term

Recognizing the lead time for business starts and expansions, the contracts will be for up to two years in duration. We expect to issue an RFP in late 2014 for another set of two-year contracts, open to service providers that have either substantially drawn down their contract from this round or that were not awarded a contract in this round. Contract dollars can be drawn on a quarterly basis as services are provided and outcomes achieved.

4. ELIGIBILITY

a. Eligible Areas

The program is available throughout the City of Minneapolis.

b. Eligible Activities

Activities are eligible if they support the economic vitality of local small businesses and microenterprises through technical assistance, which may include, but is not limited to: one-on-one sessions on legal, regulatory, and tax issues, financial record keeping, marketing and merchandizing, financial management, business operations, workforce planning and training, networking, DBE certifications, marketing plan development, loan packaging, real estate contract review, strategic and business planning.

c. Eligible Organizations

Eligible organizations include non-profit business consulting organizations that have demonstrated capacity to perform the work. This includes staff devoted to business development, establishment, and expansion activities, past organizational and staff experience providing assistance to businesses, and managing contracts. If a consultant will do some of the work through a subcontract, identify that consultant (or pool of possible consultants) and provide the consultants' qualifications.

5. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Please number your answers and provide succinct narrative that addresses the following. Be sure to review and address the evaluation criteria (see page 5) in your answers.

a. Cover Page:

- A cover page that includes the following information:
 - a. Applicant's name, mailing address, and federal ID number.
 - b. Contact person's name, title, phone number, and e-mail address.
 - c. Category for which you are applying (1, 2, 3 or all)
 - d. Signature of an individual authorized to sign on behalf of the proposing organization.

b. Organizational Background

- Provide an overview of the organization's mission, vision objectives and main accomplishments.

c. Organizational Capacity and Historical Performance:

- Provide a description of your organization's experience in accomplishing a similar scope of work.
- Please provide historical performance of clients served, new businesses developed and /or experience working with established businesses.

d. Staff and Leadership:

- Describe staff and consultants involved in the project as well as a description of the roles they will play.

e. Project Approach and Service Model

- Include a description of the model of service delivery including how the services will be marketed and to whom, how participants will be selected, and how services will be evaluated and measured.
- For categories 1 and 2, describe the type (training, TA, other) and amount (estimated) of services to be provided to each business and how the provided services will contribute to reach the outcome (new business or business growth).
- If the organization is unable to assist a client, will the client be referred to another service provider or to a workforce training provider? If so, please describe your referral process and network. Include a description of the organization's intake and screening process.

f. Project Timeline

- Provide a project timeline. (Remember that the length of the contract is 2 years and the invoices must be submitted quarterly).

g. Project Budget

- Provide a numeric and narrative budget. (Exhibit C). If your organization will collaborate with other partners, then describe how they will be compensated.

h. Other Information

- Any other information that would help City staff understand and evaluate the concept. If your organization has experience working with CDBG funds, please provide a narrative of your experience and familiarity with the documentation process.

Your proposal must include an executed "Consent for Release of Response Data" form (Exhibit B), included in this RFP document. Proposals that do not include an executed "Consent for Release of Response Data" form shall be considered incomplete. Omission is grounds for rejection of the entire proposal.

The contents of the proposal and any clarification to the contents submitted by the successful proposer may become part of the contractual obligation and be incorporated by reference into the contract between the proposer and the City.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

In reviewing Small Business Technical Assistance Program proposals, the review team will consider the following criteria. The maximum score a proposal can receive is 100.

- a. Leverage: Do the City funds leverage other resources? Leveraged funds are those that are committed to the specific activity of the RFP and add value in multiple areas. (10 points)
- b. Target Population: Would the activity directly strengthen the economic vitality in sectors with high levels of unemployment, concentration of low income residents and building vacancy in the City? Does the organization have experience working with economically disadvantage businesses? (15 points)
- c. Capacity: What is the organizational capacity to provide business consulting services? How is the organization's intake and screening process? Does the organization have the experience and capacity to conduct the work proposed? Does the organization have a track record and the ability to keep appropriate documentation? In this contract we are emphasizing in quality over quantity of services. Proposals that show a strong service model will score higher. (30 points)
- d. Feasibility and Readiness: Does the organization have the structure in place to begin delivering services immediately? Are other necessary resources committed? (15points)
- e. Evaluation: Does the organization currently have evaluation methodology in place? Does the organization measure impact? Are there "best practices" or "lessons learned" that will be transferrable? Are the proposed activities the most effective way to deliver technical assistance to Minneapolis-based businesses? (15 points)
- f. Alignment with City Goals: Does the organization's proposed activities and outcomes support multiple City goals? The City strives to provide assistance to underserved populations and minority- and women-owned businesses. Will the proposed activities fill an unmet need in these populations? (15 points)

The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions regarding selection of which business district support activities to fund.

7. RFP SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE

a. Proposal Submission and Deadline

Applicants must submit one unbound copy and five bound or stapled copies of the proposal and one electronic version. Proposals must be on standard 8½" by 11" paper. All supporting documentation must be on paper no larger than 11" by 17". Proposals and supporting documentation must be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled "Small Business Technical Assistance Program Proposal." The electronic version should be on a CD or jump drive but not emailed. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Applicants may choose to provide additional sets if and when invited to do so for presentation purposes. Submissions will not be returned.

b. RFP Deadline

Proposals shall be delivered to the City on or before:

October 18th, 2013, 4:00 pm

To:

**Contract Services
Department of CPED
105 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Attn: Daniel Bonilla**

Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is neither CPED's responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any proposal. It is the responder's responsibility to assure that a proposal is received in a timely manner. Please make sure your proposal is complete.

c. RFP Inquiries

Prospective responders should direct questions in writing to the department contact person:

Daniel Bonilla
Community Planning and Economic Development
105 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Email: Daniel.bonilla@minneapolismn.gov

All questions are due no later than October 4th, 2013. Questions will be answered in writing and posted on the CPED web site (www.minneapolismn.gov/cped). The department contact cannot vary the terms of the RFP. **A pre-proposal meeting will be held on September 27th, 2013 from 9:00 – 10:00** at the Crown Roller Mill located at 105 Fifth Ave. South, Suite 200. Attendance is recommended but not required.

d. Review and Selection Process

A committee of City staff and partner organizations will review proposals that have been received by the due date of October 18th, 2013 and make a recommendation to City Council for funding.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts of proposals, negotiate modifications to an entire proposal or specific components of the scope of work within a proposal to create a project of lesser or greater magnitude than described in this RFP or the submitted proposal.

e. Anticipated Timeline

RFP Issued:	September 20 th , 2013
Informational Meeting	September 27 th , 2013
Submission deadline for proposals:	October 18 th , 2013
Staff evaluation of proposals:	October 25 th , 2013
Recommendation to City Council	November 19 th , 2013
Contracting:	January 5 th , 2014

f. Contracts

This is a reimbursable performance-based contract. Organizations with contracts will submit invoices for payment for the delivery of outcomes in accordance with the terms of their contracts. During the

contracting period, organizations will work with City contract managers to develop a Scope of Services (see Exhibit A). The Scope of Services will be the basis for contract payments. By signing the contract the organization is committing to ***completion of all of the deliverables*** in the Scope of Services.

8. CITY CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

City and Federal requirements are extensive. The following list is not exhaustive.

- a. Data Practices** – The recipient must agree to comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and all other applicable state and federal laws relating to data privacy or confidentiality and hold the City, its officers and employees harmless from any claims resulting from the recipient's unlawful disclosure or use of data protected under state and federal laws.
- b. Intellectual Property** – The recipient must agree to provide the City with the right to royalty-free, non-exclusive license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use and to authorize others to use any intellectual property created using the grant funds. Work covered by this provision shall include inventions, improvements, discoveries, databases, computer programs, reports, notes, studies, photographs, negatives, designs, drawings, electronic files, specifications, materials, tapes or other media.
- c. Billboard Advertising** – Through Minneapolis Section 544.120, City and City-derived funds are prohibited from use to pay for billboard advertising as a part of a City project or undertaking.
- d. Conflict of Interest/Code of Ethics** – The recipient must agree to be bound by the City's Code of Ethics, Minneapolis Code of Ordinances.
- e. Hold Harmless** – The recipient shall agree to defend, indemnify and hold the City harmless from any and all claims or lawsuits that may arise from the recipient's activities under the provisions of the Contract, that are attributable to the acts or omissions, including breach of specific contractual duties of the recipient or the recipient's independent contractors, agents, employees or officers.
- f. Insurance** – Prior to starting the services described herein, Grantee shall provide evidence of (including endorsements to policies) and continually maintain throughout the term of this Agreement, workers' compensation insurance in accordance with statutory requirements. The Grantee shall also provide evidence of and continually maintain: (i) commercial general liability insurance which shall include contractual liability coverage, (ii) automobile insurance for any vehicles owned by the Grantee, and (iii) hired/non-owned automobile insurance (if Grantee will be driving automobiles not owned by the Grantee while performing services under this Agreement) in amounts sufficient to indemnify the City, but in no event less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence with aggregate coverage of \$1,000,000. Said insurance policy(ies) shall name the City as an additional insured and may not be cancelled without days' notice to the City.

8. EXHIBITS

- A. Scope of Services template
- B. Form of Consent for Release of Response Data
- C. Budget template

Reports templates:

- D. Invoice template (all categories)
- E. Business profile template (categories 1 and 2)
- F. Technical Assistance report (category 3 only)
- G. CDBG reporting requirement (categories 1 and 3)